SOUTH DAKOTA STATE LIBRARY

LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT

GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

These Application Guidelines will be of assistance when preparing a LSTA grant proposal. The guidelines bring together in an orderly fashion the basic information needed to prepare an application that meets LSTA requirements and is easily understood by the staff and the State Library Board.

A number of persons with varying backgrounds will read the application. You should provide clear and understandable information. The application must stand on its own in conveying information about the proposed project.

Additional documents which will be of assistance are: the LSTA Plan **South Dakota Libraries for the 21st Century: an LSTA Five Year Plan 2008-2013**; South Dakota Codified Law Chapter 14, Section 2; and the Administrative Rules of South Dakota ARSD 24:30:04:01 – 24:30:04:12. All of the above are available on the Internet with links from the State Library home page (www.state.sd.us/library).

Section VII in the Request for Proposal is entitled Proposal Description and discusses the four areas which must be addressed in the grant proposal. Following is an explanation of the four application components and the information which should be included in each.

General Description of the Project (50 points)

State the purpose of your project in relation to identified needs.

This section of the proposal provides a profile of the current situation and why this project is needed to improve, correct, or enhance library services. This section may include a description of current needs and support, and suspected trends. The limits of existing programs and evidence of demand for the contemplated project should be discussed.

A detailed research study is not necessary to provide identified need; however, the inclusion of available, pertinent data is advisable. A combination of hard numbers (quantitative data) or less structured information (qualitative data) may be used.

Explain how the project relates to the long range plans of the library(ies) involved.

Cite the goal(s) or objective(s) from the library(ies) Long Range Plan/Technology Plan which this project will assist in addressing. Indicate why this is a target priority for the library and its service area.

Provide measurable objectives that will assist in achieving the stated need.

State, in measurable terms, what is to be accomplished through this project. Objectives are accomplished within a definite amount of time. Measurable objectives are essential because they allow for the comparison of past, present, and future performance levels. Also, measurable objectives are essential for the evaluation of the project.

Objectives should be thought of in terms of the degree to which they will address and/or solve the identified need. They should not, in general, be focused on methods or activities. Good objectives are not product oriented. Rather, they focus on results. For example, if the problem addressed in the project is to increase the equity of access to informational resources for all residents in the county, then one possible objective would be to get 90% of all persons using the schools or branch libraries to utilize the resources previously only available to customers at the main library. Examples of poor objectives for this proposal would be "To purchase 10 computers for the branches and schools" or "To develop a cooperative association with the school district." These statements reflect activities and do not focus on a measurable need that requires the development of these activities.

Evaluation (10 points)

Present a plan to determine the impact the project will have over the next year.

Each program must develop an evaluation component for each objective. The evaluation section addresses the question how well were the objectives met. Because objectives are measurable, each evaluation statement must be measured in quantitative terms. However, qualitative assessments are also important.

Much of the focus of LSTA is on impact, whether or not the project (and LSTA funds) are having a positive impact on the community and library customers. In writing the evaluation strategy, keep in mind that you are trying to measure the impact of the project. How will you be able to tell whether the project has made any difference? Some of the answers to this question involve the collection of quantitative data (e.g., numbers of service users, turnaround time for requests, number of hours patrons utilized the Internet). Other data used to answer this question may be more qualitative (e.g., patron complaints, comments from staff, administrative effectiveness). You will be asked to do a year after evaluation of the project, so the plan to determine project impact should continue after the termination of the project.

Impact evaluation indicates the amount of difference the project has made. This will help determine whether the project has made a difference and how much of a difference it has made. Additional information on Outcomes by Evaluation is available on request.

Relation to LSTA Goals (25 points)

Indicate how this project will assist in achieving the goals and priorities outlined in the LSTA Plan.

The South Dakota State Library Board, assisted by input from the focus discussion groups, identified   several primary needs which should be addressed through LSTA funds. Based on those needs, the goals, priorities, and activities of the LSTA Plan were developed. Proposals should assist in achieving one or more of the goals and priorities, thereby addressing both local needs and statewide issues. In addition, the request must address one or more of the LSTA Priorities as set forth in 20 U.S.C. **§ 9101** *et. seq.* and described in section V of the application form.

Budget (15 points)

The cash matching is the amount the administering library (or consortium) will spend from local budgeted funds on the project. These must be local dollars – not in-kind or other federal dollars.

Identify major categories of expenditures and details on specific items within those categories.

Contractual

Includes amounts paid to outside firms and individuals for the following types of professional services: management consultants, accounts paid to outside firms and individuals for retrospective conversion, fees for databases, licenses, telecommunications costs, equipment leases, etc.

Software/Materials

Includes the cost of purchasing or renting computer software, etc.

Supplies

Includes expendable materials and supplies that are normally used by staff for retroconversion and automation projects. This excludes normal day-to-day operational supplies such as photocopy paper, pens, pencils, etc. which are not eligible match by federal definition.

Equipment

Equipment includes amounts paid to outside firms and individuals for equipment.

Note: All equipment purchased as part of this grant shall be used for the originally authorized purpose. When no longer so needed, approval to use for other purposes must

be obtained in writing from the State Library. Equipment purchases that exceed $5000 in value require approval from the IMLS Office in addition to approval by the State Library Board.

Other

Includes amounts paid to outside firms and individual for all communications, printing and publicity services, and anything that doesn't fit in other categories. Public relations must relate to the specific approved project.

Include a budget justification for major components within the budget.

A brief narrative should indicate the reasons behind the selection of items within the budget and indicate their purpose in fulfilling the stated objectives of the proposal. And, indicate that the items selected are the best and most reasonable and necessary to fulfill the stated objectives of the proposal.

Describe the distribution of match

The amount of federal and local funds for each category indicated.

Review Process

Upon receipt of the grant request, the review process begins. The LSTA Program Coordinator, the Public Library Coordinator, and the State Librarian do a preliminary review to make sure each proposal is eligible for funding.

Proposals are then submitted to the State Library Board. The State Library Board will rank each proposal based on factors and points stated in the Proposal Description of the RFP. Scores and prioritizations will be used for the final decision of the State Library Board.